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REMARKS

No claims have been amended or cancelled. Claims 10–18 have been added. Claims 1–18 remain in the application. Applicant requests reconsideration of the application as amended and in light of the remarks set forth below.

Summary of Amendments

New Claims 10–18 have been added. Claims 10–17 correspond to Claims 1–8, with the additional limitation that Claim 10 recites that the first pivotable connector is pivotable with respect to the drawbar in a generally horizontal plane. Claim 18 corresponds to Claim 9, with the additional limitation that the first pivotable connector is pivotable with respect to the drawbar in a generally horizontal plane.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,776,606 to Stephenson. According to the Examiner, *Stephenson* shows:

- a) a hitch (12);
- b) a first pivotable connector (68, the pivoting action being that of the hitch pivoting around the end of the drawbar) associated with a forward part of the hitch (12) for coupling to the drawbar (14) of the tractor;
- c) a stabilizer (45) extending laterally from the hitch (12) having elements (84) for coupling to the lift arms (16) of the tractor to prevent the pivoting action about the first pivotable connector; and
- d) a second pivotable connector (48) associated with a rearward part of the hitch (12) for establishing a second pivotable connection (around axis Y) between the hitch (12) and a hitch pivot (3) of a towed implement (20).

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The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed, because *Stephenson* does not disclose at least the feature identified in paragraph b) above. The element (14) of the tractor identified by the Examiner is not a "drawbar" as recited by the claims. Element 14 is the center arm, or top link, of a three-point hitch. The drawbar is identified in the specification of *Stephenson* as element 46 (col. 2, line 25). The pivotable connector 68 is not coupled to the drawbar 46.

The terms "drawbar" and "three point hitch" have understood meanings to those skilled in the art. For example, the term "drawbar" is defined as "A tractor component typically located at the rear and near the ground that permits attachment of implements for pulling or towing" (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ag 101, Glossary [<http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/ag101/cropglossary.html>]). A three point hitch is defined as follows:

Three-point hitches are composed of three movable arms. The two outer arms - the hitch lifting arms - are controlled by the hydraulic system, and provide lifting, lowering, and even tilting to the arms. The center arm - called the top link - is movable, but is usually not powered by the tractor's hydraulic system. Each arm has an attachment device to connect implements to the hitch

Wikipedia, "Three-Point Hitch" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-point_hitch).

These definitions of "drawbar" and "three-point hitch" are consistent with the disclosure of *Stephenson*. Note that the tractor 10 of *Stephenson* is "equipped with a three-point hitch 12, including a central upper link 14 and a pair of laterally spaced lower links 16" (col. 1, lines 66-68). Similarly, the tractor of *Stephenson* is equipped with "a tractor drawbar 46" (col. 2, line 25), which, as Figure 1 clearly shows, is located at the rear and near the

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ground and permits attachment of implements for towing, consistent with the definition in the EPA Glossary *supra*.

The Examiner cannot fashion a rejection by arbitrarily renaming components of the tractor in clear contravention of the plain meaning of the specification of *Stephenson* and contrary to established meanings of the terms as understood by those of ordinary skill in the art. *Stephenson* does not show a first pivotable connector for selective coupling to the drawbar 46 of the tractor as these terms are understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art, and Claims 1–9 are therefore believed allowable.

Claims 10–18 are also allowable over *Stephenson*. To the extent that the connection between a hitch element and the top link of a three point hitch is pivotable, it is pivotable in a generally vertical plane substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tractor. Claims 10–18 recite the “first pivotable connector” as being pivotable in a generally horizontal plane. *Stephenson* does not show a first pivotable connector being pivotable in a generally horizontal plane. Therefore Claims 10–18 are believed allowable.

A request for a one-month extension of time for filing a response, together with the fee required by 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a)(1), is enclosed. The time for filing a response is thereby extended to May 11, 2006. This response is therefore timely filed.

The foregoing is believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated January 11, 2006. For the reasons set forth above, the present application is believed to be in

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condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested, and allowance of the claims at an early date is courteously solicited.

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